

Press Release
July 31, 2020

Council writes to businesses in support of workers' rights

Derry City and Strabane District Council is contacting businesses and employers across the Council area advising them of a notice of motion resolved by elected members around workers' rights and trade union membership.

At the April meeting of Full Council, a notice of motion was passed calling on Council to write to local employers requesting that they allow unobstructed access to trade union representation for their workers in the district. The motion also called on employers to facilitate meetings of workers to allow them to discuss how and what to do with regard to any concerns they may have regarding Covid-19.

In the letter, which will be distributed to businesses and employers across the Council in the coming weeks, companies will be advised of a number of other motions that were passed by Council in support of the national living wage, supporting good terms and conditions for all employees and opposing the practice of Zero Hours Contracts.

The letter will state Council's corporate position as agreed by elected members -: "Council, as a corporate body, has expressed our support of the Workers' Rights and Social Justice agenda on numerous occasions and are clear supporters of the trade union movement.

"To this end we would encourage all responsible employers in the district to recognise formally the relevant trade union in order to ensure that all workers are supported and that work environment based on mutual respect and understanding is fostered among all employees.

"In addition, during the current crisis, it is more important than ever that views of workers are taken into account as we move from lockdown through the phases of reopening. Council believes that, in engaging with the workforce, all employers; private, public and voluntary sectors; can ensure that they achieve a smooth transition from lockdown back into a degree of normal working, within the restrictions / safe working guidelines for Covid-19."

Employers across the Council area will also be advised that Council has expressed their support for employees to be paid the national living wage as opposed to the minimum wage and that all employees should have good terms and conditions as part of their employment.

The letter will state Council's opposition to zero hours contracts and call on all employers and organisations to pay the national living wage as policy and to consider the terms and conditions of each role and, where applicable, revised those for the benefit of the employees. Those in receipt of the correspondence will be encouraged to respond to Council to outline their views with regard to the issues raised.

Members of Derry City and Strabane District Council who met last week for their July Full Council meeting, agreed that the letter would be communicated via the Council's ezine and social media platforms, in an effort to reach out to as many employers and organisations as possible.

Ends